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ABSTRACT

An overview is provided of factors to be considered in assessing and improving the quality and effectiveness of a college's recruitment materials. Part 1 addresses the questions of how to and why assess the effectiveness of student search publications. This section compares various methods of conducting college surveys to determine students' perceptions of college publications (i.e., interviews with representative groups; in-class, mailed, or telephone surveys; and focus group research). Part 2 looks at the use of consultants in creating and carrying out a publications plan, highlighting areas in which consultants can be of particular value, the experiences of Johnson County Community College (Kansas), methods of selecting a consultant, the importance of finding a creative staff member to lead the publication redesign effort, and the establishment of good working relationships between all individuals working on the publications team. Part 3 outlines steps in developing a publications plan, including studies of student perceptions, gaining staff support and involvement, and establishing specific objectives. Finally, part 4 considers the cost of redesigning a publications program, presenting options for those with shoestring and moderate budgets. (LAL)

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STREAMLINING STUDENT SEARCH MATERIALS:

DEVELOPING A PLAN

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Presentation at the Annual Conference
of the Council for Advancement
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HOW TO ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT SEARCH PUBLICATIONS. AND WHY

A. Background

Early researchers in student publications - the earliest I could find were a couple of fellows from the University of Kentucky named Charles F. Elton and Lewis Donohew - were interested in basic information. The late '50s were the dark ages of student publications: few public universities had them in any profusion and the ones that did exist were not subject to much examination. The principal document in those days was the college catalog, a document that had been described by one study as one of the "dullest and least intelligible" forms of literature available in America.

I might interject here that advertising and promotion were far from new to higher education by the early '60s. They had been tried with varying degrees of success since colonial times. The earliest example of a college ad is thought to be a promotional tract issued by Harvard in 1643 entitled, "New England's First Fruit." It has been described as having all the charm of an invitation to attend reform school.

In retrospect, it is understandable why so little emphasis had been placed on college publications up to the early 1960s. When Elton and Donohew did their study, none of us were out beating the bushes for college students. Rather, we were about to be deluged by baby boomers and were desperately seeking resources to expand and modernize our institutions to accommodate them. College publications were more of a hazing process than they were helpful, informative, enticing or illuminating - or alluring or elucidating, for that matter. If a student could master the enrollment process using one of them, that was evidence enough of the ability to do college work.

In 1963, Elton and Donohew wrote an article for College and University

titled "The College Catalog: Some Preliminary Research." In it, they reported the results of a survey of how students obtained a copy of the school's catalog, its chief information document. The survey was a simple one. One hundred students, a statistically random sample of 50 entering freshmen and 50 transfer students, were asked four questions in personal interviews.

The university's policy was to give a catalog to any transfer student who requested it, but to give only an inexpensive reprint of the first few pages of the catalog to incoming freshmen and to give one to transfer students only if they asked for it. The study found that almost 60 percent of the incoming freshmen surveyed had obtained a catalog anyway and that nearly 80 percent of the transfer students also had gotten one, this despite obstacles put in their paths.

Now empirically this may not have been the best way to conduct a study. I don't think my research director would like it. But I'd like to comment on this study for three reasons.

1. It illustrated that students - even in the dark ages of college catalogs - found such materials useful and important. This fact has been born out again and again in research much more sophisticated than this. STUDENT RECRUITING MATERIALS DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

2. It illustrated that a school doesn't have to go to great lengths to find out what its students think about its publications. In my opinion, if you are interested in finding out what students think about your catalog, or viewbook or search materials you should ask them. You don't need George Gallup or Louis Harris. YOUR STUDENTS WILL TELL YOU WHAT THEY THINK.

3. It asked questions that continue to have an impact on the production of college publications today. Chief among these was this: to what extent are student recruitment materials responsible for mismatching students and colleges?

This last question has emerged repeatedly in the literature on college publications for the last 20 years. It is an issue that goes to the very heart of our credibility as institutions of higher education. Students have certain rights as consumers of higher education. Among these federally sanctioned rights is the right not to be misled by college or university recruiting materials.

Concern about a rising tide of what the Carnegie Commission has termed "hucksterism" in higher education prompted the formation of Project CHOICE at the University of Michigan from 1977 to 1980. This federally funded project's goal was to provide better information for college-bound students, information that would permit them to make informed choices about which school they wanted to attend, information that was reasonably objective.

I would like to introduce two books - very briefly - that grew out of Project CHOICE research. They are Improving College Information for Prospective Students and Attitude and Opinion Research: Why You Need It/ How To Do It. These books are available through CASE. They are excellent source documents with extensive bibliographies and they are also full of practical examples of how to conduct survey research and of the results of research conducted by Project CHOICE.

I want to emphasize that whatever we as college publications professionals do to enhance the reputation of our institutions, to attract more students, and to promote the general welfare of higher education should be done with

these objectives in mind. If we act as hucksters, we will be treated as hucksters. Our ultimate goal is to help students decide what avenue is best for them. We must keep this firmly in mind as we prepare publications and conduct institutional advancement efforts.

This has been, perhaps, an overly long introduction to the specific areas I will cover, but I think it adequately paves the way for what I now want to discuss with you.

First of all, why try to assess the effectiveness of student publications? The answer is simple. Assessing student publications is simply a form of market research. Before we develop a publications plan we have to know what our publics want and need so we can design materials that effectively address those wants and needs. A common way of finding these things out is through attitude and opinion surveys. There's an excellent article on this subject by Walter K. Lindenmann, a senior vice president with Hill and Knowlton responsible for attitude and opinion research. In Public Relations Journal in January, 1977, he wrote the following.

"It's the usefulness and quality of a survey that counts...how meaningful the results are and how we can apply them effectively to our needs." Lindenmann emphasizes that we have to have a plan. Too many surveys are undertaken by people who fail to recognize the limits of opinion and market research. Don't think you'll learn everything from surveys. Use them to augment, to enhance, to refine. Use them in developing a plan.

That brings me to my second subtopic.

B. Interviews

I prefer managable, common-sense approaches to opinion research. This means, as much as I like Lindenmann's ideas I prefer the primitive methods of Elton and Donohew. An important element in developing a publications plan is

finding out what students want and need. One way to do this is ask them. Select what appear to be some representative groups and conduct personal interviews right at the start of the semester. Enlist the help of admissions people and others who have an interest in student recruitment materials. Enlist the help of your research office if you have one. Make it fun. Develop a short set of questions relative to publications. Show them the publications and ask them to respond. Record the responses, tally them up - just like Elton and Donohew - and then draw some conclusions. Do this on a continuing basis, from semester to semester. Look for changes or trends.

C. Surveys

Lindenmann also wrote a section of the CASE opinion research book on survey methodology. I'm not going to go into this in any depth here. There is plenty of literature available. Lindenmann did one while he was at Hofstra University in New York as a vice president, a sample of which you'll find in the CASE book. I strongly advocate surveys that are administered in class, perhaps on the first or second day of class. You have a captive audience, they have to fill them out, they are in school and geared to think about it, etc. The problem, of course, is getting your academic dean and division directors to have the faculty hand out and collect the surveys. You have to be organized and make it as easy and painless for them as possible.

Another way to administer a written survey is by mail. This is time-consuming and expensive. What is worse, however, is that your response rate probably will be about 30 percent. You can hit a whole lot of people with a mail survey, but relatively few of them will respond. You have much more control over one you hand out in class.

A third method of surveying is by telephone. I do not recommend that a school attempt this with its own staff. Most businesses - newspapers, for example - that do extensive telephone surveying to determine reader attitudes, habits, etc., have them done professionally. They are expensive.

Briefly, a written survey must - I repeat must - be pre-tested on faculty, staff and students. The questions should be developed first by you and your staff, again with the help of your research office if you have one, and then floated around the administrative group for additional input. Once the survey is designed, it should be administered to the test groups just like the real McCoy will be on survey day. You'll have to decide what you want to know. What kinds of publications do you have? How are they distributed? Do students think they are helpful? Where did they obtain them? Use the survey resource books available to help you.

D. Focus Groups

By now all of you have heard of focus group research. It is commonly employed by companies in pre-testing products. It involves gathering a group of statistically representative consumers, placing them in a room with an experienced interviewer, and allowing them to respond to a product or products spontaneously and candidly. Company executives often sit behind a one-way mirror and view the process. Later in the session they might be asked to come out and participate. This is also effective for public relations practitioners who want constituents to air their feelings about a company or company policies. It is a method of opening up two-way communication so essential to the public relations process. It must be conducted by a professional. This will cost. Participants have to be screened carefully and the agenda for the meeting must be precise.

II HOW AND WHEN TO SELECT AND USE A CONSULTANT IN PUBLICATIONS PLANNING

A. Why Use a Consultant?

I don't pretend to have an answer to this question that would apply to every school represented here. I can, however, tell you how I used two consultants effectively last year to help create and carry out my publications plan. And I can tell you why I thought this was the most effective option given the circumstances.

First, I assume that all of you are faced, to one degree or another, with a confused bureaucratic hierarchy in which the public relations component is pulled and pushed in all directions by competing deans, directors, vice presidents and faculty. If you weren't in some degree of distress, you wouldn't be at this meeting. But - all good presenters must say this - there is hope. My advice is to think of yourself as a catalyst - and a very important one - for institutional goal-setting and a degree of internal organization. (Amplification)

A consultant can be of great value in this process because he or she enters the institution as a neutral observer whose dispassionate, professional judgements must be regarded seriously, and out of the normal "political" context. Call the consultant a hired gun, if you want. The purpose of bringing one to your campus is to shake things up.

Last January the scenario at Johnson County Community College went something like this. Tremendous internal dissatisfaction with institutional publications existed. These included seven bulletins mailed to 114,000 Johnson County households throughout the year, the school's Viewbook, passed out to high school students and used as a general recruiting piece. the

school's Catalog, 23,000 of which are printed each year, and a wide range of additional publications produced to promote individual courses.

The problems were many. Allow me to show you some slides at this point. Note that there was no insitutional identity expressed in these publications; no consistency in design, color, tone or message. They were produced by the school's graphics department, which reported to the head librarian. As the Public Information Director, I was responsible for coordinating the editing and organization of the pieces, and for pushing them through graphics. It was a mess. In January I assumed administrative responsibility for graphics and, almost immediately, set about correcting the problem. This involved developing a publications plan. My first step was to bring in a consultant.

I was fortunate to obtain the services - gratis it turned out - of Patti Crane of Spruiell Publishing Co. in Dallas. Spruiell specializes in producing college catalogs, viewbooks, search pieces and other recruiting publications. Crane and a group of hand-picked designers and editors will come to your campus like a swat team and soak up everything from local color to student opinions. They'll meet with your faculty and staff. They'll turn your campus upside down. Then, they'll go to their hotel room and spend two days putting together ideas. Bingo. Out comes a comprehensive plan. You pay for all this specialized activity by agreeing to print your pieces with Spruiell. It isn't cheap.

Crane is a friend of a local higher education doyen, Larry Rose, who suggested she might find a visit to our campus interesting. She agreed to come as a consultant for a day, even though she understood that it would not lead to a publishing contract. She normally does not do this type of work. It simply isn't lucrative enough.

She visited JCCC in early February. I scheduled an entire day for her in a large conference room right across the hall from my office. The day was divided. In the morning she met with a cross-section of the college staff concerned with our major recruiting publications. Tnis included all our deans - student services, community services. academic affairs. and institutional advancement - and a number of key directors. Also included were all members of the graphics staff, our print plant director. student activities director, admissions director, etc. In the afternoon she met intensively with my staff.

Let me interject that prior to her visit, I had written her a long letter about the situation, sent her sample copies of publications and provided her with cost analyses. You must be frank, specific and detailed about what you want a consultant to do for you. You must give them structure. Otherwise they'll give you a generic rap that won't hit the points you want to cover. In our case there were two primary problems: a certain amount of mistrust and misunderstanding among various divisions and branches about the publications/recruitment process and, consequently, a lack of a coordinated design plan. Her job was to help people in my institution see that the problem of a publications plan wasn't going to be solved by their continuing to point fingers at each other and at the graphics department. It also was to help my staff realize that there was a path out of the woods.

In the morning she discussed general objectives with the staff. Perhaps the most important concept she dealt with was the need for a school to recognize - institutionally - that publications were everyone's business and that cooperation was needed to create a successful communications plan.

Through her emphasis of this point I achieved my single biggest objective. I gathered the key players in my institution in one room and had an outside expert tell them things were awry and they had to work together to fix them. This created an unspoken, unwritten bond among them. As we moved through the subsequent creative process of publications redesign, this bond served us well. The key staff were there when Moses came down from the mountain. They heard, saw and were enlightened.

Crane was extremely patient. She answered questions, offered suggestions, discussed her general impression of the campus and the school, emphasized how cooperation - pulling together - was needed to achieve success, and discussed what other schools were doing. Throughout she emphasized the creative team concept. This concept is simply that an institution can attempt to achieve - internally - what she and her team do for their client schools if it has the resources. I might add here that I think most schools do have the resources.

What Crane did not do - and I don't blame her - was offer specific creative suggestions. She talked around things. If we wanted the full ride we were going to have to pay for it. And that was as it should have been. I bring this up because, again: YOU MUST BE SPECIFIC ABOUT WHAT YOU WANT A CONSULTANT LIKE THIS TO ACCOMPLISH. You can't expect one to lay out an entire plan for you. They exist to help you crystallize overall objectives and win widespread staff buy-in for your project.

Crane's work with my staff was more detailed. We discussed picture usage, typography, color, overall design and message...all the trade jargon. And they loved it. She could rap specialty press work with the best of them. She critiqued in detail. She also went over, in detail, how a creative team should be organized. I'll discuss this presently.

B. How Do You Select a Consultant?

Please note that there is an article in CASE Currents, 1981, 7, (2), 22-23, on this subject. Choose someone who is recommended to you by people you trust. Use CASE. Check the person out. Make sure you there is no ambiguity when you strike your deal. Be prepared to pay about $700 and expenses for a day. Some consultants require that you commit for two days. You may be able find cheaper people. But remember, the reputation and integrity of the person you select will carry a lot of weight in your institution. Publishing companies such as Spruiell that have experts like Crane exist throughout the country. But, as I said, they want your business, and you may not be able to afford them. (Invite questions)

C. Finding a Creative Leader

Once you've had your big gun in to shake things up, you'll want to look for someone to lead the specific redesign effort at your school. This may be a staff member, or it may be a creative consultant from your area. I chose the latter route. I just didn't have a staff member I could assign to the project. My publications editor at the time was overcommitted to working with campus clients. For a wide range of reasons, I felt I needed someone who was from the outside and objective.

There are talented editors and designers in every community. Some are better than others. Look around your own backyard first. Chances are you know someone who might be right for such an effort, who wants the business, and who can commit. Designers and editors with college or university experience present excellent possibilities, <u>if</u> they also have worked outside. My best advice is to find someone with a small firm - perhaps doing independent

consulting work - who will hire on with you on a per diem basis for a period of time.

I chose a local editor/writer that some of you may know: Dan Reeder, formerly the editor of the KU Alumni Magazine, a national CASE award winner for a number of years running, who now has his own business in Lawrence. I knew him, had a high degree of confidence in his abilities, and was able to schedule him for a period of time that worked in with his schedule and mine. If you decide on an ambitious redesign project, which we did, you are going to need your creative leader for several months. We had Dan for parts of March, April, May and June, an average of three days a week. Total cost: $8,000 including expenses. After I had convinced the staff - via Patti Crane - that a cooperative effort to redesign publications was a good idea, getting the money from my President to hire Dan was fairly easy.

A word about hiring someone from your staff. You may have an individual who is underutilized or, because of your personnel system, doesn't have a job that quite measures up to his or her abilities. Perhaps you can give this person a boost by naming them the special project coordinator and giving them extra money for the responsibility. Be careful. Do this only if you have a high degree of confidence in your creative people and if this person has good credibility on campus and excellent professional skills. Taking this route means you will have to spend extra time. Do you have it?

D. Working Relationship

When you use the creative team leader concept to redesign publications you must develop a close relationship with the person you hire or appoint. They have to know, candidly, what you think about the people they will be

leading. This means you might have to stretch your normal tendancy to keep your opinions about personnel to yourself. With a consultant this should be no problem. He or she would be expected to be discreet. A staff member might be less so.

Give your creative leader a thorough written plan. I wrote out a five-page analysis of the problems, personnel and objectives I had. I told him who on staff he would be working with, told him to expect there might be some creative friction, gave him a timeline, and came to a financial agreement in advance that established his working days and deadlines for the things he was to accomplish.

This plan permitted Dan to meet with all the staff I have previously identified - one-on-one - and to spend time simply getting to know the school. I was flexible, knowing he would need to get a feel for the place before he could really get to work. I am providing you with a copy of our working agreement. It doesn't have specific charges. but it outlines the objectives we set and the timelines.

E. The Creative Team

Putting together a creative team to tackle publications redesign is a rewarding experience. It's just tremendously satisfying from a management perspective and from the perspective of the team members. Ultimately. it reverberates positively through your college. as well.

After Patti Crane visited, I held a staff meeting and indicated that we would be pursuing a total publications redesign for the College that would give the school a visual identity. I stated that we would use the creative team concept she discussed with them. I named the members of the

team I had selected - a designer and photographer - and told them I had hired Dan Reeder to be the creative team leader. I introduced him at a subsequent staff meeting before he met the college staff at large.

I spelled out to my staff the overall objectives of the project and told them that the creative team would be freed from regular staff duties for much of the redesign time. This, I said, would no doubt create some hard feelings when the workload was heavy. But I emphasized that all our staff, including myself, would be making substantial extra contributions to see this project through successfully. They should not view this as the efforts of three people, but as a staff effort, everyone contributing in their own way for the duration. Picking up the slack was just as important as the team's work. I emphasized that we all would win as a team when the redesign was successfully completed.

I gave the creative team a special office and provided them with secretarial support. They needed a place of their own where they could go and shut the door. I'm not going to tell you that everything was a bed of roses. There were complaints and frictions. But by keeping people in mind of the overall goal, I was able to steer my staff through this minor turbulence.

III DEVELOPING THE PLAN

A. Spadework

I have covered, to an extent, the type of groundwork you need to do to create a plan of this nature. You need to find out what your students think about your publications. You need to get the staff to recognize the problem

and commit to a cooperative solution. You need to sell the idea internally to the chief executive. He's got the bucks. Staff buy-in helps in this process. You need to write down your goals. You must develop these based on a realistic assessment of what you can afford and accomplish, but don't restrict yourself. After you've looked at your publications, polled your students and staff, and digested the material, you'll have a good idea of what your school needs. Use your creative team leader to get you there. Build support as you go. Don't lock yourself into a cost figure for the new publications. Get into the process first, then introduce costs as you have buy-in. STAFF INVOLVEMENT WILL WIN YOU FINANCIAL SUPPORT. I'll talk more about this in just a moment. It's an important point. Make sure your creative team leader continues to solicit staff opinion when he comes on board. Don't just spoon feed him. This is vital to winning overall staff support. Remember, during this entire process you are selling yourself and your staff to the instituion. Keep these things in mind.

1. Keep your President thoroughly informed of what you are doing. Schedule an hour a week with him if you can at the same time. Have him meet periodically with the creative team. Make sure he knows you are working within the institution to keep people informed about the process.

2. Keep your "key players" similarly informed. You don't have to tell them what you are doing at every juncture, but when you've reached a break point - for us it was the development of the JCCC logo - get them involved. Make them know you care. Make sure your creative director remains sensitive to institutional politics.

3. Keep your finger on the general pulse of the school while this process is under way. If you sense misunderstanding, meet with the appropriate groups to clear up problems. Your job is to communicate the importance of the mission without sounding like a pompous ass. You are the sales manager of this project, the account supervisor.

B. Setting Specific Objectives

Up to this point I purposefully have not been specific about the publications plan itself. You have to develop your own plan. You don't want to copy mine. The plan you develop will depend on many things. How much money do you think you can raise? I just stated that if you laid your groundwork properly and kept people informed, you might raise a lot more of those "scarce" institutional resources than you think you can. After all, publications are everyone's business and everyone stands to gain if your school produces outstanding ones. Don't limit yourself from the outset. Find out what types of needs you have, propose publications that will meet those needs, then seek the funding.

Our plan was anchored by deadlines that existed for the production of the College Catalog, the College Viewbook and the seven bulletins I mentioned. The Catalog had to be designed and printed by early June, 1986. The Viewbook was needed by September, 1986. We began our yearly cycle of course bulletins with the fall credit course bulletin, printed in May, 1986. Printing deadlines were determined by bids let two months in advance. So we had to work quickly.

As I saw it, JCCC had a good photographer. A lot of our color work, however, had been design color work. That's because the photographer and the design staff weren't part of the same team. The design color work. as you have seen, was lousy. I wanted to get away from reinventing the wheel and use the photographer to maximum advantage. Consequently. I proposed that we do photo-oriented covers.

I was also strong on people pictures. Our institution was built in the early 1970s. It is brick and it looks rather cold and forbidding on the top of its prairie knoll. So we felt like it needed humanizing. This

also fit well with the demographic makeup of JCCC. About 50 percent of our students are non-traditional. We have a strong need to portray student types.

As I mentioned, I allowed Dan about four complete working days to visit with campus people, begin discussions with my creative team and generally define what he was up to. This might not sound like much time, but you must consider the extensive background information I prepared for him and the fact that he had no additional responsibilities to clutter up his day. His job was to think publications. It is important for you to keep a creative leader focused this way. You can't allow them to stray into institutional affairs that don't concern them. You have to hold them responsible for what they have to accomplish.

In our case the specific objectives were arrived at partly before and partly after Dan's initial backgrounding. We needed a new visual identity. We needed visual and design consistency. We needed to humanize our college and to portray it as a multi-faceted place geared to meet many needs. We needed to make the best use of our internal creative resources. And, over all of this, we wanted to project an image of success.

C. Executing the Plan.

After that, it was a matter of fufilling our contract. Dan felt we needed a strong, letter logo. Johnson County Community College is a pretty big mouthful. As much as I hate acronyms, I had to agree that JCCC was not offensive. REMEMBER, IT TAKES UP TO FIVE YEARS FOR YOU TO ESTABLISH AN IDENTITY. This means you have to be ready to live with what you select for a long time. So don't be afraid to question and to put the creative idea to the acid test. We didn't get a negative reaction to JCCC and it presented

interesting design possibilities, so we went with it. I thought about it a long time before I agreed, however.

Once we had decided on the letter logo, it was a matter of the campaign tone. We're a top community college, and we want our publications to reflect that. Why are we a top college? The quality of our academic programs is reason number one. How did we make a cold-looking institution warm, convey the idea of success, stress our responsiveness to people and - this is important - make ourselves feel good about ourselves? We chose to go from the small to the large.

In executing our plan we decided to focus - through art-directed photos - on fine, tight shots of academic activities and on people. The pieces I will show you on slides and pass around to you will reflect this. These are slides of what we came up with.

Descriptions of each piece.

IV THE QUESTION OF MONEY

A. What's It All Cost?

It cost nothing for the first, big-name consultant. It might cost $700 a day. It cost about $8,000 for Dan Reeder. This worked out to about $350 a day. It sounds like a lot, but we got a lot in return. If you asked my President today if this was a sound investment, he'd give you an unqualified yes. The publications we printed: Search Piece - 50 cents a copy (10.000 printed); Profile - 38 cents a copy (5,000 printed); Viewbook - $1 a copy (20,000 printed); Catalog (88 cents a copy) 23.000 printed. We brought the Viewbook in for the same money we spent two years ago. The key was reducing its size from 40 pages to 20 pages plus cover. Your printing costs may vary.

B. Shoestring Budget Plan.

If money is a problem, I recommend putting your eggs in one basket. A catalog isn't a communication piece. Develop a nice general information piece that doubles as a viewbook. Make sure you could hand it to a prospective student and a local business person. This sounds tough, but it can be done. A viewbook doesn't have to speak to just one audience. Ours doesn't. We think of it as our best foot forward. Look hard at what you are now doing. Are you doing things like an annual report that you don't really need to be doing? Are some pieces simply vanity pieces? Can you turn out some well-done, but inexpensive, general information pieces like bookmarks, cards, or pamphlets? What kinds of in-house resources do you have? Are you using them to the max? Web printing is much cheaper than four-color. With a higher grade of paper, you can produce attractive web pieces. (Brigham Young).

C. Moderate Cost Plans.

I have seen some excellent black and white viewbooks. A community college in Omaha, Neb., Metropolitan Technical College, printed one last year that I thought was extremely effective in conveying a mood about their school. They portrayed a variety of student types in large pictures. Each student was shot at night or right at dusk against varying backgrounds: a city skyline; a hospital; a suburban home. The effect was striking. You got the feeling that this was a no nonsense, practical school helping people get going. This design happened to be very new wave. But it wasn't costly. The number of pages in the book were relatively few, the photos were done in-house. And the printing was done locally. Here I might remind you all of something you already know. Local printers will negotiate for

your business. A college is a prestige account. This is worth money to the printer and to you. I have seen printers come down $1,000 on a $5,000 job just to hook our account.

D. Obviously, four-color pieces like those we did aren't for everyone. But if you can afford them and if you have a talented photographer and designer on staff who will take the time to art-direct the pictures, four-color photography in printing is the solid, proven way to go. This is my opinion. I'm not a college student. I'm not a design expert. I do get Communications Arts and a host of other publications. But I don't pretend to have magic answers. I see that many schools are printing posters for kids to hang up on their walls. We have printed some to hang up in schools. I think these type of attempts are fine. But a word of caution. which brings us back to the introduction. You are there to communicate, not to act as a huckster. It's easy to get carried away with creativity. We're surrounded by hype, why not take a bath in it? Bear in mind that whatever publications plan you attempt, you must serve your students' needs and help them make informed decisions.

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"Streamlining Student Search Materials: Developing A Plan"
(marketing, publications and student recruitment)

Directed to all professional levels

Bob Burdick has 18 years experience as a writer, editor, administrator and institutional advancement professional. During the last nine years he has worked for two large state universities and one of the nation's top community colleges.

He is Director of College Information and Publications at Johnson County Community College in Overland Park, KS, a Kansas City, Mo. suburb. JCCC enrolls about 9,000 credit students each semester and serves 25,000 people a year through community education courses, activities and special events.

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